CLASSIFICATION OFFICE DECISION

Title of publication:	Lost Girls
Other known title(s):	Not stated
OFLC ref:	1400231.000
Medium:	Book
Distributor:	Not stated
Artist:	Melinda Gebbie
Author:	Alan Moore
Publisher:	Top Shelf Productions
Country of origin:	United States
Language:	English
Applicant:	Auckland Council
Classification:	Objectionable except if the availability of the publication is restricted to persons who have attained the age of 18 years.
Descriptive note:	Contains explicit sexual material.
Display conditions:	Either The book must carry a label issued in accordance with a direction under s36(A)(2) of the FVPC Act and The book must not be publicly displayed in any place in which the publication is available for supply, and must be shown in that place only to persons who make a direct request for the publication. Or The book must carry a label issued in accordance with a direction under s36(A)(2) of the FVPC Act and The book must be publicly displayed only in a sealed package.
Date of entry in Register:	07 July 2014
Date of direction to issue a label:	04 July 2014

Date of notice of decision: 04 July 2014

Summary of reasons for decision:

'Lost Girls' is a graphic novel with text by Alan Moore and images drawn by Melinda Gebbie. The book was submitted for classification by Auckland City Libraries. Its creators describe it as a work of pornography and its contents are explicitly sexual. The book's three main characters are the young heroines of classic works of fiction: Alice, from Alice's Adventures In Wonderland; Dorothy from The Wonderful Wizard Of Oz; and Wendy from Peter Pan. The story presents the three characters as adults who meet by chance at an Austrian hotel just before the outbreak of the First World War. Dorothy and Wendy are drawn into sexual activity by Alice and the three women share stories about their early sexual experiences, which include sexual molestation and incest. Other notable elements in the book are pornographic pastiches in the style of authors and artists of the period, including Aubrey Beardsley and Oscar Wilde.

Lost Girls is a challenging work that contains problematic material. However, the book has been widely acclaimed for its literary and artistic significance, and its call for the freedom of the sexual imagination. The book has a serious purpose: author and artist intend it as "good" pornography that re-asserts pornography's potential as art and therefore, its socio-political possibilities as an antidote to repression and violence. It is likely that most readers will experience some discomfort at images and text that appear to challenge strong social taboos. However, the publication as a whole does not promote or support, or tend to promote or support, any of the activities shown.

The book is clearly intended for adult readers. There is a consensus amongst the public of New Zealand that children and young people should not be exposed to explicit sexual material intended for adults until they reach a level of maturity and experience that would allow them to cope with such material. In particular, young readers should not be exposed to images and text that they would be likely to find extremely shocking and disturbing. The availability of 'Lost Girls' is therefore restricted to adults. Given how explicitly sexual the book is, the classification does not greatly interfere with the right to freedom of expression set out in the New Zealand Bill of Rights Act 1990. In light of the book's intended adult readership, the decision is a reasonable and justified limitation on the freedom of expression.